

ON SECRET SOCIETIES

Rev. Dr. Talmage Expresses His View of Them.

EVILS OF BAD ASSOCIATIONS.

Advices All to Test Their Usefulness by Two or Three Rules:—First, its Influence on Your Home; Second, its Effect on Your Social Occupation; Third, its Effect on Your Sense of Moral and Religious Obligation.

Washington, July 28. — A practical question which is asked in most houses, and for many years, is here asked by Dr. Talmage in his sermon, "Evils of Bad Associations," delivered at the First Baptist Church, New York, Sunday, July 28. "Discover not a secret to another."

"It appears that in Solomon's time, as in all subsequent periods of the world, there were people too much disposed to tell all they knew. It was blab, blab, blab, physicians revealing the case of their patients, lawyers exposing the private affairs of their clients, neighbors advertising the faults of the next door resident, pretended friends betraying confidences."

One-half of the trouble of every community comes from the fact that so many people have not capacity to keep their mouths shut. When I hear something disparaging of you, my first duty is not to tell you, but if I tell you what somebody has said against you and then go out and tell everybody else what I told you and they go out and tell others what I told them, and we all go out, some to hunt up the originator of the story and others to hunt it down, we shall get the whole community talking about what you did do and what you did not do, and there will be as many scapes taken as though a band of Modocs had swept upon a helpless village. We have two ears, but only one tongue, a physiological suggestion that we ought to hear a good deal more than we tell. Let us join a conspiracy that we will tell each other all the good and nothing of the ill, and then there will not be such awful need of sermons on Solomon's words, "Discover not a secret to another."

Solomon had a very large domestic circle. In his early days he had very confused notions about monogamy and polygamy, and his multitudinous associates the matrimonial state kept him too well informed as to what was going on in Jerusalem. They gathered up all the privacies and poured them into his ear, and his family became a sort of female debating society of 700, discussing day after day all the difficulties between husbands and wives, between employers and employees, between rulers and subjects, until Solomon, in my text, deplores volubly about affairs that do not belong to us and extols the virtue of secretiveness.

By the power of a secret divulged families, churches, neighborhoods, nations, fly apart. By the power of a secret kept great charities, socialities, reformatory movements, and Christian enterprises may be advanced. Men are generous and noble in their secret, but they are selfish and mean in their disclosure. In the secret, they are noble and generous, but in the disclosure, they are selfish and mean. You may plant the discharge of a gun scatter a flock of quails or by the plunge of the anchor break up the denizens of the sea, but they will gather themselves together again. If you by some new power could break the associations in which men now stand, they could again be united. He has gathered all the flowers and shrubs into associations. You may plant one forget-me-not or heartsease alone, away off upon the hillside, but it will soon hunt up some other forget-me-not or heartsease. Plants love company. You will find them talking to each other in the dew.

You sometimes see a man with no outpourings of sympathy. His nature is cold and hard, like a ship's mast ice glazed, which the most agile sailor could never climb. Others have a thousand roots and branches. Innumerable tendrils climb their hearts and blossom all the way up, and the fowls of heaven sing in the branches. In consequence of this tendency we find men coming together in tribes, communities, churches, in societies. Some gather together to cultivate the arts, some to plan for the welfare of the state, some to discuss religious themes, some to kindle their faith, some to advance their craft.

Here we find the oft discussed question whether associations that do their work with closed doors and admit their members by passwords and greet each other with a secret grip are right or wrong. I answer that it depends entirely on the nature of the object for which they meet. Is it to pass the hours in revelry, waste, blasphemy and obscene talk or to plot trouble to the state or to debauch the innocent, then I say, with an emphasis that no man can mistake, No! But is the object the defense of the rights of any class against oppression, the improvement of the mind, the enlargement of the heart, the advancement of art, the defense of the government, the exposure of crime or the kindling of a pure hearted society, then I say, with just as much emphasis, Yes.

There is no need that we who plan for the conquest of right over wrong should publish to all the world our intentions. The general of an army never sends to the opposing troops information of the coming attack. Shall we who have enlisted in the cause of God and humanity expose our plans to the enemy? No: we will in secret plot the ruin of all the enterprises of Satan and his cohorts. When they expect us by day, we will fall upon them by night. While they are strengthening their left wing we will fall on their right. By a plan of battle formed in secret conclave we will come suddenly upon them crying, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." Secrecy of plot and execution is wrong only when the ob-

The father sometimes finds the sand soft and yielding to his feet. It does not trouble him and he goes on until presently he sinks to his knees and discovers to his horror that he has to fight for his life in a quicksand.

Disease is much like the quicksand. The first symptoms of stomach trouble do not cause anxiety. But when the body grows weak through lack of nourishment and disease of the stomach and bowels, liver, lungs, liver or kidneys, the sufferer realizes his danger and seeks for medicinal aid.

Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery cures diseases of the stomach and bowels, liver, lungs, liver or kidneys, the sufferer realizes his danger and seeks for medicinal aid. Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery cures diseases of the stomach and bowels, liver, lungs, liver or kidneys, the sufferer realizes his danger and seeks for medicinal aid.

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ject and ends are nefarious. Every family is a secret society, every business man and every bodyguard and insurance institution. These men who have no capacity to keep a secret are unfit for positions of trust anywhere. There are thousands of men whose vital need is culturing the capacity to keep a secret. Men talk too much, and women too. There is a time to keep silence as well as to speak. Although not belonging to any of the great secret societies about which there has been so much violent discussion, I have only words of praise for those associations which have for their object the maintenance of right relations among the members of the community, or like the score of mutual benefit societies called by different names, that provide temporary relief for widows and orphans and for men incapacitated by sickness or accident from earning a livelihood. Had it not been for the secret labor organizations in this country, many of our laboring men would long ago have been pauperized by the greed of the laboring classes in an intolerable servitude. The men who want the whole earth to themselves would have got it before this had it not been for the binding together of great secret organizations, and while we deplore many things that have been done by them, their existence is a necessity and their legitimate sphere distinct and pointed out by the providence of God. Such organizations are trying to displace from their association all members who are in favor of anarchy and social chaos. They will gradually cease any furthering of the cause of the poor and will forbid violent interference with any man's work, whether he belongs to their union or is outside of it, and will declare their disgust with any such rule as that passed in England by the Manchester Bricklayers' Association, which says any man found running or working beyond a regular speed shall be fined 2 shillings and sixpence, or the first offense, 5 shillings for the second, 10 shillings for the third and if still persisting shall be dealt with as the committee thinks proper.

There are secret societies in our colleges, and they have letters of the Greek alphabet for their nomenclature, and their members are at the very front in scholarship and irreproachable in morals, while there are others the same in character, and they graduate knowing a hundred times more about sin than they do of geometry and Sophocles. In other words, secret societies, like individuals, are good or bad, are the

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